

CHARIVARIA.

A TOPICAL touch was given to the proceedings of the Congress by Dr. WALSH, who, in a paper which he read, undertook the white-washing of LUCREZIA BORGIA.

In view of the present pretty custom of suggesting that a Cabinet Minister is mixed up in every scandal of the day, it seems almost uncanny that no one should have hinted darkly at the possibility of Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL'S having purloined the famous pearl necklace, which is admitted to have been consigned by post.

MR. HALL CAINE announces that his new book has been commended by the Archdeacon of WESTMINSTER, Archdeacon SINCLAIR, Sir DAVID JONES, Mr. WILLIAM CANTON, the Rev. Father JAY, and Sister MILDRED. May we add that one of our aunts also liked it, while Miss Effie Smith (of Balham) has written to say that she thinks it lovely and so interesting?

During the last week of the Royal Academy Exhibition sixpence was charged for admission. Several visitors expressed the opinion that it was well worth the money.

Suffragettes tried unsuccessfully to burn down the Higher Grade Schools at Sutton-in-Ashfield last week. We understand that this will prove to be the first of a series of attempts to gain the support of the rising generation.

"Among Messrs. London, Weekes & Co.'s most recent publications is an effective setting of Tennyson's immortal 'Break, Break, Break.'" This should have an encouraging circulation among the militants.

Says the author of *The Writing of English*, just published in the Home University Library:—"So precise a person as Matthew Arnold misquotes Keats's 'Pure ablation round earth's

human shores' as 'cold ablation' without a blush, and under circumstances that called for great accuracy." The classic instance, however, of such lapses is KEATS'S "pure ablation," a slip which remained uncorrected not only during the poet's lifetime, but down to the appearance of *The Writing of English*.

As a result of investigations into the sanitary conditions of the French

Visitors to Pourville have been officially forbidden "to carry away in any vessel or receptacle any quantity of sea water except by special licence." The local lock-up should be badly overcrowded on the first rough day by bathers who have inadvertently swallowed some of the precious liquid.

A short way with poets! A prisoner, up before Mr. HORACE SMITH (himself a poet) last week, asked him to read a poem he had written. The magistrate read one verse, and then sentenced the prisoner to three months' imprisonment in default of finding two sureties for his good behaviour.

The news that in the excitement of a cricket match a Leeds youth who had been dumb for ten years regained his speech does not surprise us. We have heard the most reticent man we know say quite a lot at the wickets when the ball hit him sharply on the little finger.

"A VICAR'S MORAL," announced a paragraph in *The Daily Mail*. "Dear, dear! Have we come to this?" commented an old lady, "A vicar with only one moral!"

At a ball that followed a rustic wedding the other day, there was a violent quarrel between the bride and bridegroom owing to the lady's dancing several times with her husband's former rival.

Upon the bridegroom's boxing the bride's ears, the guests thrashed him and threw him out. Among the superstitious peasantry the incident is looked upon as a bad omen, and the wiseacres are prophesying that the marriage will not be a success.

The Rev. Canon M. M. FINCH and Mrs. FINCH celebrated their golden wedding at Northfleet, Kent, last week. We congratulate these llove-birds.

The New Obesity Cure.

"If Richard —, fat boiler, will communicate with Thos. —, he will hear of something to his advantage."

Advt. in "Liverpool Echo."



THE UNSEASONABLE NUT.

Mrs. "WHATSOEVER ARE THOSE FEATHERS DOING?"

Nut. "OH, I MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN TO TAKE 'EM OUT OF MY POCKET AFTER LAST MONDAY'S SHOOT."

Chamber of Deputies it has been discovered that on occasions there are 75,000 microbes there to the cubic yard. The scandal of this overcrowding is to be taken up at once by the local Society for the Protection of Animals.

The gentleman who wrote to a contemporary last week from Saffron Walden to announce that three degrees of frost were registered there on the 7th of August did, after all, serve a useful purpose. A forgetful editor, we are informed, on reading the news, suddenly remembered that he ought to be making arrangements at once for his Christmas Number.

KAISER WILHELM TO KING CAROL.

(On the conclusion of Peace.)

GOOD KARL, your second loyal wire to hand,
Acknowledging receipt of Ours and sending
A further tribute to the brain that planned,
By just allotment of another's land,
This amicable ending.

Telegrams, as you know, We've sent before,
Throwing, at well-selected points of time, light
On Our supremacy as Lord of War,
And now this new one gives Us back once more
A place within the limelight.

For, frankly, We have been for many a day
(We who were born the cynosure of nations)
Eclipsed by this loud talk of EDWARD GREY,
How he was always, in his tactful way,
Saving the situations.

Yes, We have been bored stiff; We could not bear
Those tedious tales of how he kept his head on,
Calming the others when they lost their hair,
And, by his cool behaviour in the Chair,
Postponing Armageddon.

But now the public We so long have missed
Acclaim Us as The Man Who Made the Treaty—
Not as they make 'em at St. James's tryst,
But bearing on its face Our final fist,
German and mailed and meaty.

And, if some monarch—rival or ally—
Thinks to revise Our work a little later,
"Stet!" is our comment; "let it stand!" We cry;
"Enough to know (without the reason why)
It has Our *imprimatur*!"

Thus WILLIAM KAISER is himself again,
Halo on brow, superb in shining show-wear;
Once more Our prestige, slightly on the wane,
Retrieves its former bulk and swells amain,
And EDWARD GREY is nowhere. O. S.

THE PATRIARCHAL DRAMA.

THE statement that, at the beginning of Sir HERBERT BEERBOHM TREE's Biblical play, *Jacob* (whom our great histrionic epigrammatist is to impersonate) will be eighty-six years of age, and at the end one hundred and six, has caused a flutter in centenarian circles, for hitherto the stage has paid very little attention to very old men. But, since every new dramatic departure finds instant imitators, Mr. CLARKSON has already laid in a large stock of venerable wigs and beards.

Sir HERBERT's *modus operandi* for getting age into him is most interesting. In his charming *villeggiatura* he has been busy for some weeks on a monograph of OLD PARR, which is said to bristle with good things; he has exchanged his magnificent limousine for a bath-chair; and his constant companion is a copy of *De Senectute*. So great has been his success, at any rate superficial success, that in the towns he passes through in his quaint conveyance he is deluged with old-age pensions.

There is no truth in the rumour that Sir HERBERT has consented, in deference to the wishes (or threats) of the W.S.P.U., to let the colours of *Joseph's* coat be purple, green and white.

In giving *Potiphar's* wife the name of Zuleika, Sir HERBERT has again displayed his marvellous ingenuity and readiness. "What shall we call her?" Mr. Louis N. PARKER asked one day at rehearsal. Quick as lightning came the reply, "Call her Zuleika." Any other man would have thought for hours and then have done worse. "Or, As you Like Her" has been suggested as a sub-title to the play; but Sir HERBERT is against it.

The pit used by *Joseph's* cruel brethren in the great desert scene will be supplied by TRAPP AND CO.

As we go to press we learn that the sprightly piece to be entitled *Methuselah*, which was confidently expected from Mr. BOURCHIER, is not to be produced before 2163, owing to the thoroughness of that actor's methods.

THE NEW INTERVIEWING.

(With acknowledgments to "The Observer.")

ANXIOUS to glean some information regarding the forthcoming production at the Novelty Theatre of Mr. G. Bernshaw's much-canvassed play, *The Girl from the Niger*, our representative called upon the famous manager, Mr. Garville Banker, and put a few leading questions to him.

"Touching *The Girl from the Niger*—" began our interviewer in an inviting tone.

"Who's touching her?" inquired Mr. Banker.

"—may I ask whether it is intended to give a realistic stage-picture of the West African interior?"

"You may," was the encouraging reply.

"Of course the popular legend may provide the substance of the story, or it may merely be treated in an allegorical fashion?" it was suggested.

"There are those alternatives," said Mr. Banker.

"And I suppose you do not intend to introduce a real tiger on the stage?"

"Do you?"

"If an allegorical treatment is adopted it is possible that the tiger may be designed to represent the retribution that follows upon the prevailing feminine follies of the age?" insinuated our representative.

"The word 'possible' covers every eventuality that may present itself to the imagination," replied the talented *impresario*.

"Do you think that an author should produce his own plays, or that a professional producer should be universally employed?" was the next question.

"I don't think," replied Mr. Banker.

"Does Mr. Bernshaw agree with your revolutionary stage methods?"

"I'm afraid we shall have some rain after all," said Mr. Banker, rising and peering anxiously out of the window.

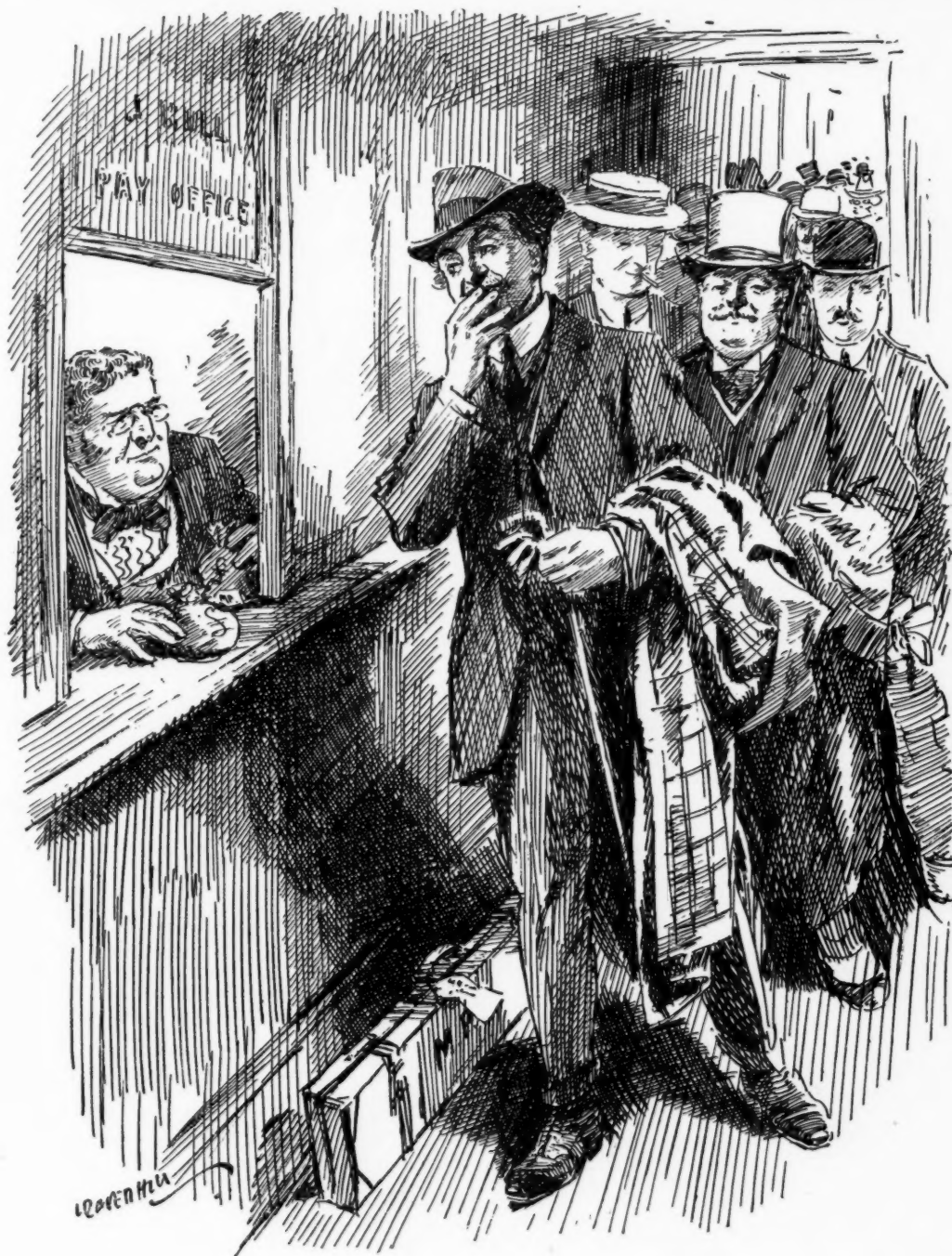
"I presume—"

"Quite so, you do."

"And one would like to know how many scenes there will be, and who are to act in the play, and whether the incidental music will be of Nigerian origin?"

At this stage of the interview, however, Mr. Banker lapsed into a contemplative silence, first toying with some papers, then looking at his watch, and finally ringing the bell. Concluding that little further information was to be obtained in this quarter and hearing a heavy footstep on the stairs, our representative took his departure.

But to one who has known what it is to interview an actor-manager like Sir HERBERT TREE about a forthcoming production and to revel in the fine, free, generous manner in which he keeps nothing back which he feels the public ought to know—oh, what a difference!



THE GOLDEN SILENCE.

CONSCIENTIOUS M.P. "I'M AFRAID I SHAN'T REALLY BE EARNING MY FULL SALARY THIS YEAR WITH NO AUTUMN SESSION."

PAYMASTER BULL (*weary with legislation*). "DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THAT. YOU GO AND TAKE A NICE LONG HOLIDAY; THE COUNTRY NEEDS IT."



Mabel (trying her first story—the latest from the Junior Atalanta Smoking-room—on Auntie). "D'YOU SEE THE POINT?" Auntie. "IF IT'S WHAT I THINK IT IS, I DON'T."

ONCE UPON A TIME.

"EAST, WEST, HOME'S BEST."

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl who was taken to the Zoo by her father. Her father's tastes were wholly scientific; he paid five guineas a year for the privilege of forgetting to give away Sunday tickets; he could add F.Z.S. to his name if he liked; and when he went in he asked for a pen, instead of paying a shilling like inferior folk. But the little girl was curiously unmoved by the world's strange fauna, whether elephants or snakes, and the result was that she followed listlessly and fatigued at her father's heels throughout the expedition, while with eager eyes he scrutinised this odd creature and that, from the very post-impressionist mandril by the Circle gate even to the distant and incredible camelopards.

The little girl, I say, was listless and fatigued—with the exception of two moments. For it chanced that as they walked in solemn procession through the house of the ostriches and the emus and various cassowaries, each of whom is named after his discoverer, they came to the Patagonian Cavy, and

the little girl, loitering at his bars, uttered a gasp of delight, for there, all unconcerned and greedy, sat a tiny English mouse, eating grain.

It looked at her with its brilliant eyes, and nibbled as though there were only two minutes of all time left for refreshment; and, secure in the knowledge of the dividing bars, it refused even to blink when she flicked her hand at it. She never saw the Patagonian Cavy at all.

"What is it? What is it?" her father impatiently inquired.

"Hush," she said. "Do come back and look at this darling little mouse."

"Pooh—a mouse," said her father, and so strode on, eager to reach the elusive apertyx. But not yet could he do so, for at the very next compartment, after she had dragged herself all unwilling from this one, the little girl stopped again, and again was absorbed, not however in contemplation of the Red-bellied Wallaby which resided there and had been brought at great expense many thousands of miles from Australia for her benefit, but of the half-dozen London sparrows which fought and scrambled and gourmandized in the Wallaby's food tin.

"Well," said her mother when the little girl returned, "and what did you see that pleased you best?" and the little girl mentioned the mouse and the sparrows, but chiefly the mouse.

And what of the mouse? "You may call yourself a Patagonian Cavy," he remarked later in the evening, "but it doesn't follow that you're everybody. Did you notice a little girl with a blue bonnet this afternoon? Just after tea-time? The one that called her father back to have another look? Well, being a poor benighted Patagonian, you don't, of course, know what she said, but it wasn't what you think it was, oh dear no. What she said was, 'Do come back and look at this darling little mouse,' which merely," the mouse concluded, "again illustrates an old contention of mine that the familiar can often give points to the startling."

"The last general election appears to have been in October, 1910. The Constitution provides for elections every two years, so that, did a normal state of things exist, they ought to take place in a couple of months. It may, of course, be pleaded, with some plausibility, that the condition is not normal."—*Times*.

It is more likely to be pleaded that the arithmetic is not normal.

PAGES FROM THE DIARY OF A FLY.

(By our Charivariety Artiste.)

II.

WHEN Editha fell behind I was able to resume my meditations on humanity. I repeat it: I really believe these men consider themselves our superiors. I have often tried to think why. Possibly it is because they are so proud of having learnt to walk on their hind legs for a longer time at a stretch than other animals. Still, when all is said and done, that is but a circus trick. And how petty are these giants, and how cruel! Their hatred of us is born in them; it comes out in their young; and it is thanks to a little brute of a boy of seven, who actually tried to kill me dead, that I have only three legs.

There are some who hold that men are more humane than they used to be. It is just possible, though I find it difficult to realise. It is true, though, that I remember my maternal grandmother telling me one day that, when she was a young girl, it was a common sight to see monsters walking about the streets selling things called Fly-papers, diabolical contrivances covered with some sticky substance which were so many death traps for us. One would see hundreds of flies on them either dead or in their death agonies. It was a gruesome sight which, grandma said, had often turned her sick. Poor old lady, she met with a violent end herself. Latterly she suffered cruelly from rheumatism, and one day, when she was dragging her poor tired limbs laboriously across the road, a horrid motor-car, which did not even blow its horn, went clean over her.

Well, well, I pondered, these are gloomy thoughts for so fine a day, and I resolved to put them from me. Just then I met a pal named Percy, and we decided to go for a ride in the Row. So we made our way thither, and each mounted a horse and had the most glorious gallop. It did our livers no end of good. My gee tried to throw me at first, but desisted on my promising not to tickle.

Shortly after this the two of us had some pretty good fun teasing a daddy-

long-legs whom we happened on near Hyde Park Corner. It was rather a shame, perhaps, as daddy-long-legs, though old-fashioned, are really quite good-natured. I always think they have such kind eyes.

Percy now said that he must be getting home, so we parted. As I was leaving the Park I caught sight of my brother Bertie, who was entering. However, I pretended not to see him, he is such a spectacle. I wonder, in fact, that he shows himself in public. Bertie is the fool of the family. Always

practically ruined, and he scarcely ever ventures out, and his best girl, a strapping wench named Maggie, transferred her affections to me. I suppose he was out to-day because it was so fine.

Near my home I myself had an ugly shock. Upon a hoarding my eye suddenly alighted upon a placard bearing the alarming words—

"KILL THAT FLY!"

and beneath these words was what I at first took to be a lifelike portrait of myself. I almost fainted with fright. I immediately thought of Lord Belchester and his immense influence. Annoyed at my lack of respect for him, had he, I wondered, caused London to be plastered with these incitements to assassinate me? I pulled myself together and looked again. Imagine my relief on finding that the fly of the placard had six legs!

The fright caused by the "Kill that Fly" poster quite knocked me over, and on reaching home I sank back into an arm-chair feeling far from well. Soon I fell into a restless sleep, and I must have slept for some hours for, when I woke up, none the better for my rest, it was quite dark. I pulled myself together and made my way to the dining-room, where Lord Belchester was at dinner. I dined with him. It was a reckless thing to do, but fortunately he never recognised me. All went well until sweets were served, when I had the misfortune to overbalance myself and fall into a glass of Vichy water. It was only with the greatest difficulty that I was able to scramble out. At one

moment, indeed, I thought it was all over with me. Phew! It is this kind of incident that ages us flies. Death by drowning is indeed a constant menace to all of us. My own dear mother perished in a cup of tea, suffering all the agonies of scalding as well. I often think that it is a pity that steps are not taken to teach us long-distance swimming. We can most of us keep up for a certain time, but so soon get exhausted.

(To be concluded.)

The Treaty of Bukarest.

(By Our Military Prophet.)

C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas la paix.



THE RAGE FOR ANTIQUE BRIC-À-BRAC.

"WHERE SHALL I SEND IT FOR YOU, GOVERNOR? TO THE QUAYS?"

"No, TO BUNGALOW TOWN. IT'S FOR A HOUSE, NOT A SHIP."

brainless, as a youngster he developed into a bit of a fop, and acquired in a very short time a reputation for being a lady-killer. And what must he do one day but fall in love with a painted lady? The butt rfly gave him quite plainly to understand that she could never consort with anyone who was not of her own genus. At that, the silly young ass decided that he would become a butterfly. He imagined the process to be quite simple. So one fine morning he settled on a pat of butter at a cheesemonger's—and escaped with his life, but no legs and no eye-lashes. Now he is an almost helpless cripple—a sheer hulk. So near was he to death that his nerves are



Teuton (on being told it is too rough to bathe). "YOU ENGLISH SAILORS—THE OCEAN, IS IT YOURS? ACH! WE SHALL SEE!"

A TRAGEDY OF THE SEA.

William Bales—as nice a young man as ever wore a cummerbund on an esplanade—was in despair. For half-an-hour he and Miss Spratt had been sitting in silence on the pier, and it was still William's turn to say something. Miss Spratt's last remark had been, "Oh, Mr. Bales, you do say things!" and William felt that his next observation must at all costs live up to the standard set for it. Three or four times he had opened his mouth to speak, and then on second thoughts had rejected the intended utterance as unworthy. At the end of half-an-hour his mind was still working fruitlessly. He knew that the longer he waited the more brilliant he would have to be, and he told himself that even BERNARD SHAW or one of those clever writing fellows would have been hard put to it now.

William was at odds with the world. He was a romantic young man who had once been told that he nearly looked like LEWIS WALLER when he frowned, and he had resolved that his holiday this year should be a very dashing affair indeed. He had chosen the sea in the hopes that some old

gentleman would fall off the pier and let himself be saved by—and, later on, photographed with—William Bales, who in a subsequent interview would modestly refuse to take any credit for the gallant rescue. As his holiday had progressed he had felt the need for some such old gentleman more and more; for only thus, he realised, could he capture the heart of the wayward Miss Spratt. But so far it had been a dull season; in a whole fortnight nobody had gone out of his way to oblige William, and to-morrow he must return to the City as unknown and as unloved as when he left it.

"Got to go back to-morrow," he said at last. As an impromptu it would have served, but as the result of half-an-hour's earnest thought he felt that it did not do him justice.

"So you said before," remarked Miss Spratt.

"Well, it's still true."

"Talking about it won't help it," said Miss Spratt.

William sighed and looked round the pier. There was an old gentleman fishing at the end of it, his back turned invitingly to William. In half-an-hour he had caught one small fish (which he had had to return as under the age

limit) and a bunch of seaweed. William felt that here was a wasted life; a life, however, which a sudden kick and a heroic rescue by W. Bales might yet do something to justify. At the Paddington Baths, a month ago, he had won a plate-diving competition; and though there is a difference between diving for plates and diving for old gentlemen he was prepared to waive it. One kick and then . . . Fame! And, not only Fame, but the admiration of Angelina Spratt.

It was perhaps as well for the old gentleman—who was really quite worthy, and an hour later caught a full-sized whiting—that Miss Spratt spoke at this moment.

"Well, you're good company, I must say," she observed to William.

"It's so hot," said William.

"You can't say I asked to come here."

"Let's go on the beach," said William desperately. "We can find a shady cave or something." Fate was against him; there was to be no rescue that day.

"I'm sure I'm agreeable," said Miss Spratt.

They walked in silence along the beach, and, rounding a corner of the

cliffs, they came presently to a cave. In earlier days W. Bales could have done desperate deeds against smugglers there, with Miss Spratt looking on. Alas for this unromantic age! It was now a place for picnics, and a crumpled sheet of newspaper on the sand showed that there had been one there that very afternoon.

They sat in a corner of the cave, out of the sun, out of sight of the sea, and William prepared to renew his efforts as a conversationalist. In the hope of collecting a few ideas as to what the London clubs were talking about he picked up the discarded newspaper, and saw with disgust that it was the local *Herald*. But just as he threw it down, a line in it caught his eye and remained in his mind—

"High tide to-day—3.30."

William's heart leapt. He looked at his watch; it was 2.30. In one hour the waves would be dashing remorselessly into the cave, would be leaping up the cliff, what time he and Miss Spratt—

Suppose they were caught by the tide. . . .

Meanwhile the lady, despairing of entertainment, had removed her hat.

"Really," she said, "I'm that sleepy—I suppose the tide's safe, Mr. Bales?"

It was William's chance.

"Quite, quite safe," he said earnestly. "It's going down hard."

"Well then, I almost think—" She closed her eyes. "Wake me up when you've thought of something really funny, Mr. Bales."

William was left alone with Romance. He went out of the cave and looked round. The sea was still some way out, but it came up quickly on this coast. In an hour . . . in an hour. . .

He scanned the cliffs, and saw the ledge whither he would drag her. She would cling to him crying, calling him her rescuer. . . .

What should he do then? Should he leave her and swim for help? Or should he scale the mighty cliff?

He returned to the cave and, gazing romantically at the sleeping Miss Spratt, conjured up the scene. It would go like this, he thought.

Miss Spratt (wakened by the spray dashing over her face). Oh, Mr. Bales! We're cut off by the tide! Save me!

W. Bales (lightly). Tut-tut, there's no danger. It's nothing. (Aside) Great Heavens! Death stares us in the face!

Miss Spratt (throwing her arms around his neck). William, save me; I cannot swim!

W. Bales (looking like Waller). Trust me, Angelina. I will fight my way

round the point and obtain help. (Aside) An Englishman can only die once.

Miss Spratt. Don't leave me!

W. Bales. Fear not, sweetheart. See, there is a ledge where you will be beyond the reach of the hungry tide. I will carry you thither in my arms and will then—

At this point in his day-dream William took another look at the sleeping Miss Spratt, felt his biceps doubtfully, and went on—

W. Bales. I will help you to climb thither, and will then swim for help.

Miss Spratt. My hero!

Again and again William reviewed the scene to himself. It was perfect. His photograph would be in the papers; Miss Spratt would worship him; he would be a hero in his City office. The actual danger was slight, for at the worst she could shelter in the far end of the cave; but he would not let her know this. He would do the thing heroically—drag her to the ledge on the cliff, and then swim round the point to obtain help.

The thought struck him that he could conduct the scene better in his shirt sleeves. He removed his coat, and then went out of the cave to reconnoitre the ledge.

Miss Spratt awoke with a start and looked at her watch. It was 4.15. The cave was empty save for a crumpled page of newspaper. She glanced at this idly and saw that it was the local *Herald* . . . six days old.

Far away on the horizon William Bales was throwing stones bitterly at the still retreating sea. A. A. M.

A VARIETY ARTIST.

THE itinerant entertainer who chooses for his pitch the turf within the ropes at the Oval is a fellow not without courage. For there are policemen about, and the score-card sellers pass frequently; and whatever may be the desire of the authorities to encourage the brightening of cricket it is doubtful whether they would allow any vagabond performer to take his stand upon the very field of play.

Yet the official must be stern indeed who would molest the perky little chap with the bright eyes, the knowing look, and the sprightly manner who sometimes entertains occupants of the six-penny seats. I was watching him the other day. He wore no hat; his clothes looked as if he habitually slept in them (which no doubt he does); and he was not over-clean. He belonged to the gutter, the young scamp, and little did he care who knew it. He kept within a few yards of the edge of the turf, and

facing his audience with all the assurance of a LITTLE TICH (yet keeping a sharp look-out for any who might come to turn him off) he pursued one of his methods of making a living. Perhaps only a few, if any, quite understood what he was saying; but if you will accept my version I think you will not be seriously misled.

"Now, gentlemen all," he piped in his thin, staccato voice, "they ain't 'ittin' any fours this artemoon, and the game's shockin' slow; so I'll ask your kind attention for a few moments to my little efforts to amuse you. First of all, gents, I propose to roll in the grass just like as if it was the dust old 'Tich out there keeps kickin' up in 'is 'op, skip and a jump to the wicket. Followin' that, I shall, if I 'ave any luck, engage in a contest under catch-as-catch-can rules wiv one of the wriggly denizens of this 'ere grass, if 'e'll only 'ave the pluck to put 'is 'ead out for 'arf a mo'. After that, I will give my celebrated performance of chasin' from the field one o' them overgrown insults to our speeces as is no use to anybody till they are plucked and shoved underneath the pastry. And, finally, I will give my side-splittin' imitation of a Petticoat Lane canary afore 'e's got 'is best clo's on.

"But first I'll ask you to throw in a few contributions, just by way of encouragement." Here a piece of bun struck him; but instead of taking offence he nibbled at it eagerly, and with his mouth full expressed cordial thanks. "Nine more like that, gentlemen all, is what I ask, and then the show begins," he continued. "Nine crumbs only—bun, biscuit or bread; I'm not perticklar. Thank you, Sir. Thank you, Sir. Seven more, and I begin with no further—thank you; much obliged, Sir—no further delay. Only five more, gentlemen. (Needn't look so cross, you with the nose; it's only crumbs I'm askin' for; I don't want to rob you of your whiskey.) Throw 'em on the grass, gentlemen, or I'll come and take 'em from the 'uman 'and, which you like! Now, only two more required, and the performance absolutely—"

But at this exciting moment the banquet spread upon the grass around the entertainer brought a baker's dozen of other sparrows and a couple of gigantic pigeons on to the scene. I cannot sully this fair page with the words which the one who was on the very brink of his performance presumably addressed to the intruders. Seizing the largest crumb with his beak, he flew over towards Hobbs and gobbled it greedily, and then departed to the other side of the ground, where I hope he found better luck.



Householder (having subdued burglar with discarded golf club). "H'm! THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER REALLY LIKED THAT CLEEK!"

TWO OF A TRADE.

THE moment Charles Meredith entered our Temple flat, just after we had finished our lunch, I knew that he was in trouble and meant to carry it off lightly. His face gave him away to those who, like myself, knew him well. Knowing, moreover, my Marjorie's fatal gift of spotting my unconfessed wickednesses, and her deadly habit of not allowing me to carry them off lightly, having also suffered much from odious comparisons between myself and this same Charles Meredith, I looked forward to a pleasant ten minutes or so. But I ought to have known that I am never very far out of trouble myself when Marjorie and trouble are about.

"I have come up to apologise to you, Mrs. Shelley," said he.

I waved a kindly hand at him. "Don't mention it," I said airily; "all is forgiven."

Marjorie said she would endorse this view, if she knew what the trouble was. I begged Charles, as being the only person who did know, to tell her.

After some hesitation, Charles began: "The fact is that a long, long time ago an uncle and aunt of mine fixed this week-end for their annual visit."

"If they are anything like my uncles

and aunts," said I, "it seems that you are entitled to the apologies."

"We dare not put *them* off," said Charles, "and we have only one spare-room."

I had suddenly the instinctive feeling of having not done something which I ought to have done. Was it possible that Charles had given me a message for my wife which my wife had never received? My worst fears were realized when Charles proceeded to inform us that his wife bitterly regretted having to put us off. "Let us," I said hastily to Charles, remembering now exactly what the message was that I had omitted to deliver—"let us go back to our respective chambers and resume our work. It is high time, very high time, that we were forgetting our respective wives and devoting the whole of our great minds to the affairs of others."

Marjorie got between me and the door. "Put us off what?" she asked.

"Didn't he tell you?" asked Charles, pointing an accusing finger at me.

I interrupted. "If you ask me..."

Marjorie interrupted. "I was asking Mr. Meredith. Yes, Mr. Meredith?"

"If you ask me," I continued, "he probably didn't, but he will do so now.

Some little time ago a message was

despatched to you, which got lost in transit. It was to the effect that the Merediths would be delighted if we would spend the week-end in their Surrey home. The week in question would have started ending to-morrow, I believe. But now, since the uncle and aunt have unhappily intervened, shall we disperse without referring again to the melancholy affair?"

"Really, John," Marjorie began (I suffer more from "really" than from any other word in the dictionary). And then to Charles, "Why, I ought to have written to Mrs. Meredith days ago to thank her for asking us, for of course we should have loved to come. Of course it doesn't matter a bit about putting us off, and it was awfully kind of you both to have thought of asking us. But what does worry me is what she will think... *really*, John."

"What, again?" I said. But Marjorie's face had now assumed the familiar I-wish-I-had-married-somebody-else expression.

"But that doesn't matter in the least," said Charles, with great heartiness.

"But it does matter," said Marjorie, with so much more that Charles's bosom obviously burst with pride in his own generosity. "You would



WHEN A MAN DOES NOT LOOK HIS BEST.

HUMILIATING POSITION OF BATHER WHO HAS REACHED THE LIMIT OF HIS POWERS IN SWIMMING TO THE DIVING-RAFT.

never treat your wife in this off-hand way."

"Yes, yes," said Charles. "I mean, no, no."

Marjorie I didn't mind—she is my fate and is, no doubt, good for me—but there came to be that element in the attitude of Charles which gave me to think that he was easily carried away. "And now," he said finally, arming me towards my own exit, "we ought to be getting back to work. Come along, you, John."

My next remark may not bear the impress of startling intelligence, yet it was the cleverest I have ever made in my life. "Marjorie," it ran, "you'll have to write to Mrs. Meredith and explain."

Charles waved the suggestion airily aside. "Don't you trouble to do any such thing," said he.

Now this Charles and I, friends though we be, have met as bitter opponents in the forum at any rate sufficiently often for me to know when he is in a hole and is trying to jump out of it.

"Write she must," said I, firmly.

"Write she must not," said Charles.

"Oh, yes," said I.

"Oh, no," said Charles.

Charles turned to Marjorie, brushing me aside much as he does his learned friend on the other side in court, when he is endeavouring to bounce a judge. "I am sure you will take it from me that there is no need to write."

I, on the other hand, kept that silence which I always keep when I know that judgment is going to be in my favour, however caustically pronounced.

"I shall most certainly write to Mrs. Meredith and explain," said Marjorie, "however incredibly monstrous the explanation may sound."

The arrogance of Charles collapsed. "I beg of you, as a favour to myself," he pleaded, "to do no such thing."

"But why not?" asked Marjorie.

"Because Charles has forgotten to tell Mrs. Meredith that we were ever asked," said I pleasantly; and to Charles, more in sorrow than in anger, as I led him from the room, "Really, Charles . . ."

"President Wilson has denounced the 'insidious lobbying' against free wool in the United States."

A column of these insects, five miles wide and 18 miles long, is sweeping over the country."—*Sydney Morning Herald*.

Help!

THE MERMAID'S TOILET.

WHEN Summer suns have warmed the sea

To sixty-two or sixty-three,
I saunter thither o'er the sand,
My brindled costume in my hand,

And find, as might have been foreseen,
An occupant in each machine,
While heavy booking in advance
Indefinitely queers my chance.

Mermaids through the ripples dash,
Mermatrons also sport and splash,
And, by the steps, a thought more dressed,
Wait others eager to divest.

However, sanguine on the whole,
In patience I possess my soul,
For girls who wear such scanty kit
Will soon slip out and into it.

But other habits, cut and dried,
Are not so lightly laid aside,
And ere I take my tardy turn
This bitter, bedrock truth I learn:—

Though garments to be donned or loosed

To four or five have been reduced,
Woman takes root in her machine
As if she still were seventeen!



A QUESTION OF DETAIL.

SIR EDWARD GREY. "YOU'LL HAVE TO GO, YOU KNOW. THE CONCERT FEELS VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THAT."

TURKEY. "AND WHO'S GOING TO TURN ME OUT?"

SIR EDWARD GREY. "CURIOUS YOU SHOULD ASK ME THAT; IT'S THE ONE POINT WE HAVEN'T DECIDED YET. HAVE YOU ANY PREFERENCE IN THE MATTER?"

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

House of Lords, Monday, August 11.

—Heard of potted plays. Regarded from point of view of frequenter of *matinées*, they are nothing compared with this afternoon's performance of Potted Bills. Order of the Day contained as many as twenty-eight separate measures standing at various stages of progress, all bound to be put through at current sitting. Recognised that only possible way of accomplishing stupendous task was to meet an hour earlier than usual. Accordingly at quarter-past three LORD CHANCELLOR took seat on Woolsack. Notice was taken that his constitutionally slim body bulged out in measure suggesting recent enjoyment of exceptionally lusty lunch. Explained later that these were amendments to Mental Deficiency Bill. Their total, including overflow, amounted to no fewer than ninety-one.

Two front benches well filled. Below Gangway to right of Woolsack was here and there a Bishop. For the rest, red leather benches were with one exception unoccupied. Exception had important consequences affecting course of public business. The solitary unofficial peer was CAMPERDOWN, known to his peers as CONVERSATION CAMPERDOWN. Sobriquet acquired vogue because so full is he of information, so eager to convey it, that where another would interpolate a sentence in Parliamentary conversation he makes a speech.

On the Order Paper, amid battalion of Bills waiting to be carted off to Statute Book, there stood in his name a question so voluminous that it would have sufficed less gifted men for a treatise. Had something to do with alluring topic of Undeveloped Land Duty. In the Commons the thing would have been treated as a question. Minister to whom it was addressed would have read reply and there an end on 't. In the Lords innocent-looking question may, and frequently does, lead to prolonged debate.

For CAMPERDOWN something of pathos underlay prosaic circumstance of hour. Prorogation near at hand. This might be last opportunity of adding to long series of speeches with which during the Session he has endeavoured to enlighten unsympathetic, sometimes inattentive, gatherings. Set to as fresh as if it were a brisk day in February instead of a languorous thunder-charged afternoon in

August. STRACHIE, so recently imported from the Commons as to be still influenced by its methods, treated interpolation as a question. Read reply prepared by the Department he represents in the Lords.



MENTAL DEFICIENCY AMENDMENTS.
(LORD HALDANE.)

But for SELBORNE, House might forthwith have got to business. When one remembers historical scene in the last century when the first Viscount WOLMER, called to the Peerage by the death of the Earl of SELBORNE, insisted on remaining in the Commons—a revolutionary movement in which he was backed up by two other elder sons known at the time as GEORGE CURZON and ST. JOHN BRODRICK—his adaptation to later conditions is marvellous in its fulness. Come to be recognised as one of the most effective debaters on Front Opposition Bench.



DAY-DREAMS.
(LORD LANSDOWNE.)

Jumped up now and said a few words having remote reference to LLOYD GEORGE and his famous Budget. Thus encouraged, CAMPERDOWN positively made another speech. CREWE, most courteous-mannered man that ever led a hopeless minority, thought it incumbent upon him to say a few words. Pretty to see how, standing at Table, he, before opening his mouth, deliberately buttoned the front of his coat, with obvious intent to discourage expansion of phrase. In this he succeeded.

When he sat down the scanty audience glanced anxiously at Leader of Opposition. Would he think it necessary to follow Leader of the House? Happily LANSDOWNE, dreaming of verdurous sea-haunted Derreen in far-off Kerry, not inclined to risk delay in reaching that haven of rest by blocking Bills with idle talk. Accordingly made no move. CAMPERDOWN rose again. Was he on homœopathic principle going to fill vacuum by reiterated vacuity? With sigh of relief was heard to ask leave to withdraw the motion that had served as a peg for his diversion. Request hurriedly granted, and House went into Committee on Mental Deficiency Bill.

Noble lords, looking at their watches, found it was a quarter-past four. CAMPERDOWN had spent for them the precious sixty minutes dearly bought by earlier hour of meeting.

Business done.—More than a score of Bills coming up from the Commons disposed of.

House of Commons, Tuesday.—Considering near approach to Prorogation and the lure of well-earned holiday, attendance at opening of business this afternoon surprisingly large. Due to fact that important statement on condition of affairs in the East of Europe expected from FOREIGN SECRETARY. Opportunity provided by Second Reading of Appropriation Bill, upon which may be discussed all matters in the heavens above (e.g. insufficiency of aeroplanes), on the earth beneath (the Piccadilly flat) or in the waters under the earth (lack of submarines).

On motion made, EDWARD GREY rose and in studiously casual manner remarked, "There is some information I should like to give the House with regard to foreign affairs which I think it certainly ought to have before it separates and on which it is necessary for me to make some explanation." In this characteristic manner was in-

roduced a speech of profoundest interest not only at home but abroad.

If ever there was a time when habitually impregnable modesty might temporarily yield to pressure it was here presented. As Sir EDWARD pointed out, up to outbreak of war in Balkans last October, there had been universal expectation that it would be the signal for a clash of arms among the Great Powers. Some would be unable to keep out of it, and if one or more were brought in it was impossible to say how many others would follow. That calamity, threatening the greatest war since the days of NAPOLEON, has been averted. By common consent the

with regard to the rumours arising out of HALDANE's journey to Berlin in February, 1912, he observed, "It is not difficult to tell the truth; the difficulty is to get the truth believed." That difficulty he surmounted in his communications with the Foreign Ambassadors. The rest was comparatively simple.

Not easy to name a statesman who in equally critical times has done such supreme service not only to his country but to the Continent. The only man who seems unconscious of its magnitude is Sir EDWARD GREY.

Business done.—Appropriation Bill read a second time without division.

Friday.—Parliament prorogued.

HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH HOLIDAY-MAKING.

By NINE MAYORS.

(With apologies to a well-known photographic firm.)

Extract from Preface:—This book resembles no other book that has ever appeared. You never read anything like it before, and probably you never will (intentionally) do so again. It is about happiness, and nine mayors have written it to tell you how and where to be happy. What mayors don't know about being happy isn't worth knowing. Is there not an old proverb



THE FALL OF THE CURTAIN.

leading part in the difficult delicate task has been played by the British Foreign Minister.

Through months of anxious labour, unresting, unhurried, with sublime tact, unruffled patience, inflexible urbanity, he has at long last won a victory more renowned than any achieved in the annals of War. One secret of his success, generously extolled this afternoon on Opposition benches, is the conviction slowly but surely growing in the minds of Representatives of Foreign Powers with whom he has had dealings, that he is an honest man who says exactly what he means and, in spite of unfailing politeness, will resolutely do what he thinks is the right thing.

In one of his clearly-cut sentences EDWARD GREY defined the difficulties that since diplomacy was first set to work has envied its practitioners. Speaking in the House of Commons

"A CORRECTION.

Through inadvertence, the name of Mr. John Smyth, Moyarget, Ballycastle, appeared in the list of persons fined for drunkenness in our report of Ballycastle Petty Sessions in our last issue. Instead, the charge against Mr. Smyth was that of burying a horse within the statutory distance off the public road. We tender our apologies for the error and regret the unpleasantness involved."

Coleraine Chronicle.

All the passers-by regret the same.

"The flowers of nasturtiums make a dainty and delicious sandwich. Lick the flowers just before they are to be used, plunge them into cold water, to remove all dust or a lurking insect."—*Montreal Family Herald.* Personally we would rather lick them after the dust and insects have been removed.

"Dr. T. J. Van Loghem, the Amsterdam infectious very long after biting a yellow fever infectious very long after biting a yellow fever patient."—*Evening Standard.*

He mustn't do it again.

that says, "The mayor the merrier?" Very well then.

HAPPY MOMENTS AT MUDPOOL.

By the Mayor of Mudpool.

I consider that at no place in the world has the visitor better opportunities for winning your Million Pound Happy Moments prize than at Mudpool; and, as the largest shareholder in the Pier and Winter Gardens Co., I ought to know. Here seascape and landscape are so pleasantly combined that on six days out of seven it is impossible to tell which is which. Surely there is significance in the old association of mud and larks. Come, then, to Mudpool and lark.

JOSHUA JUDKINS,

Mayor of Mudpool.

HAPPY MOMENTS AT SLUSHVILLE-ON-SEA.

By the Mayor of Slushville-o.-S.

Your suggestion that I should write



(After a desperate encounter with a conger-eel, which takes possession of the boat, Edwin persuades the monster to return to its element.)
 Extract from Angelina's correspondence: "YESTERDAY EDWIN AND I CAUGHT A SPLENDID CONGER-EEL, BUT UNFORTUNATELY IT FELL OVERBOARD."

to you, pointing out the many advantages which Slushville offers to competitors in your Happy Moments contest, is one that I readily comply with. [Idiot! Don't give the thing away. It was supposed to be spontaneous!—Editor of Symposium.] Of the joy to be had at Slushville I will simply say that the town supports five concert parties, three bands, and a scenic railway; and leave intending visitors to judge for themselves. I should, however, add that on the morning after last August Bank-Holiday no fewer than seventy-five cases of alleged inebriation were the subject of judicial enquiry, many of them being accompanied by disorderly conduct. And yet they say that the English take their pleasures sadly. Not at Slushville!

AMOS HIGGS,
 Mayor.

HAPPY MOMENTS AT TRIPTON.

By the Deputy-Mayor of Tripton.

The only objection that I can see to urging intending competitors for your Million Pound Happy Moments to seek them at Tripton is that it is so unfair to all the others. It is impossible to be anything else but happy at Tripton. Why, we have a town-crier who is enough to make a cat laugh. Why not photograph him? And as for

"picturesque" bits they abound. What about the old fish-market (or, to avoid misunderstanding, I should rather say the old market for fish)? Nor will lovers of the artistic willingly neglect such a spectacle as Sunset on the Tram-terminus. So I extend a hearty welcome to all and sundry. Even should you fail—which is unlikely—to secure the million, you will at least have spent a happy time (and I hope much else) at entrancing Tripton.

JOHN BROWN,
 Deputy-Mayor of Tripton.

HAPPY MOMENTS AT SANDBOROUGH.

By the Chairman Sandborough Council.

Salubrious Sandborough is so well known as the chief health and pleasure resort in the British Isles that any attempt on my part to enlarge upon its many advantages in a competition such as the one that you are so generously instituting would only be to gild the already refined lily. Passing by, therefore, such adjuncts to true happiness as our covey of Arabian donkeys (unequalled on the coast for speed and comfort); our bathing beach, where at high-water mixed bathing (or neat if preferred) may be enjoyed with absolute safety, the depth never exceeding twelve inches; and our casino, boasting the most matured collection of illustrated

papers to be found in Great Britain, I would draw attention to the important fact that, if true happiness is to be found in health, then Sandborough offers both. For the past twelve months our death-rate has been 1 per population, that one being the local undertaker, who died of starvation. Need I say more? Remember the old phrase, "As happy as a Sand(borough)-boy." Come then to Sandborough, and win the prize.

THOS. J. PINKERTON,
 Chairman Sandborough Urban District Council (but counts as a Mayor).

And so on.

The Revolt of the Missionary.

The Eastern Daily Press on the Human Leopards' Society of Cannibals:—

"Investigations showed the state of things to be so serious that a special tribunal was appointed, and over 400 parsons, including several paramount chiefs, were arrested."

We trust that no Colonial Bishops are implicated in this new policy of retaliation.

From a story in Pearson's Magazine:

"Mrs. J. G.'s bosom heaved, her eyelids snapped open and shut, and she glared her defiance at her husband. J. G. sighed again." He never did like his wife's transparent eyelids.

THE FRIENDLY WAITRESS.

Saturday, August 9th.—Arrived quite safely this afternoon at Les Vallons, which is really one of the most beautiful places in Switzerland. A grand view of valley and mountains. Our hotel stands high and commands the best of the scenery. Mary and Dorothy have become members of the Tennis Club. Little Cynthia and Dick are, of course, too young, but there is plenty of amusement for them in other ways. In fact this is an ideal place for children, and Edith and I are sure to have an easy time in looking after them. There are several Russian and French families in our hotel, all very stout and jolly-looking. We seemed quite sylph-like in comparison with them. Curious how foreigners nowadays run to fat. We all dined at the *table d'hôte* in the evening. We were looked after by the head waitress, who insisted on our taking a helping of every course. She is extremely friendly and seemed hurt by the mere idea of our refusing anything. It was a long dinner, and the leg of mutton struck me as unnecessary after what we had already eaten. Children a little flushed, especially Cynthia.

Tuesday, August 12th.—At the *table d'hôte* luncheon to-day, the two top buttons of little Dick's shorts gave way with a loud report. Under the influence of our waitress he had worked his way steadily through all the courses of the luncheon, which had included chicken patties and Irish stew and cauliflower à la crème. At the moment he was engaged upon caramel pudding. The waitress was highly pleased. She said he was increasing in weight à *vue d'œil*, which, indeed, is true of all of us. Mary and Dorothy not so keen on their lawn-tennis as I should like. Edith's skirts refuse to meet round the waist, and I myself am in great trouble with my flannel trousers. Perhaps they have shrunk in the wash. The waitress continues to urge us on at every meal and we dare not offend her. Where will this end?

Thursday, August 14th.—Had intended to make a walking excursion into the mountains to-day, but when the time for starting came could not move family. Though it was only 10.30 in the morning they were all asleep in the drawing-room. The Russian and French families prefer the smoking-room. The Russian snore has a very penetrating bass note. I cannot say I was displeased at the postponement of our walk, for the mere idea of exercise under a hot sun was most repulsive. Instead of exhausting ourselves by climbing steep ascents we all sat and watched the tennis tournament. Coming up hill afterwards to our hotel, Dick and Cynthia fell down, and before we could stop them they had rolled fifty yards to the bottom of the slope, where they lay, unable to get up, till the English chaplain, who was passing, set them on their legs and started them up-hill again. Edith and I felt inclined to cry with vexation, but what could we do? We could only sit still on a wall and hope for the safety of our children. Mary and Dorothy told me afterwards that they simply couldn't have gone down to the rescue with the prospect of having to toil up again. We hope this will be a lesson to Cynthia and Dick, but, like all children, they are thoughtless. At dinner to-night three of the buttons of my dress-waistcoat suddenly flew off, and one of them hit a French General on the forehead. He was much offended and said he had not the habitude to receive blows of buttons on the face without demanding an explanation. Mollified him with some difficulty. The misfortune was entirely due to a *poulet chasseur au riz* which I had intended to pass, but was not allowed to by our waitress.

Saturday, August 16th.—As a family we have put on eight stone since we came here. Am afraid this is not necessarily a sign of robust health. Every article of everybody's

wearing apparel has had to be let out everywhere. Have arranged to leave on Monday for home. Thank heaven, only two more *table d'hôte* dinners. Our faces are all cheek. If we could only have hunger-struck all would have been well, but the amiability of the waitress made it impossible. Wonder if the dogs will recognise us when we get home.

THE KING WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR.

(A Fable for Parents and Guardians.)

LONG years ago, in Puritania's realm,
A learned King stood firmly at the helm;
A man of blameless and industrious life,
Devoted to his exemplary wife,
A model father, generous and just,
In whom his subjects placed implicit trust.
And yet this paragon had two small flaws:
He was a slave to Logic's ruthless laws,
And owned a gift of humour far intenser
Than that of J. S. MILL or HERBERT SPENCER.
Yet all went well until that fatal year
When, as the last days of July drew near,
At Puritania's greatest public school,
Where all her noble sons are taught to rule
Her subject races, of all hues and sizes,
The King arranged to give away the prizes.

The sun shone kindly from a cloudless sky,
And rank and fashion loyally stood by
As, guided by the Reverend Head, the King
Inspected practically everything;
And then, proceeding to the College hall,
Amid the cordial cheers of great and small,
Rewarded with gilt-edged and calf-bound tomes
The scions of his kingdom's stately homes.
Then as the last prize-winner sought his seat
The King, whose voice though guttural was sweet,
Addressed the boys, who checked their loyal din
Till you might hear the dropping of a pin.
He said it gave him pure and genuine joy
To watch the progress of the human boy,
Especially when every one was yearning
To beat his neighbour in the race of learning.
"I gather," he continued, "from your Head
That you are all contented and well-fed;
That in these placid groves of Academe
Your life slips by like some celestial dream;
That, scorning luxury and slothful ways,
You lead harmonious and laborious days,
And never taste of bitter in your cup
Save at your periodic breakings-up.
Therefore, because your ardent courage falls
When you are exiled to your fathers' halls,
I have prevailed upon your worthy Head,
In recognition of the lives you've led,
To grant a boon as welcome as unique
And lengthen term-time by an extra week."

* * * * *
Within three days the monarch's blameless life
Was ended by a young assassin's knife.
Yet there are British parents, I am told,
Who his audacious sentiments uphold,
Who mourn in secret his untimely doom
And offer furtive tribute at his tomb.

"Mrs. — wore a lovely dress of black and gold; and carried a bouquet of yellow roses (all given by the bride's brother)."
Isle of Man Times.
And the leaves, too? How generous!



Father (finding his son doing nothing in particular near forbidden cupboard). "BOBBIE, HAVE YOU BEEN EATING THE JAM AGAIN?"
 Bobbie. "CAN YOU SEE ANY MARKS ROUND MY MOUTH, FATHER?" Father. "YES." Bobbie. "THEN I HAVE."

PSEUDO-NEO-GREC.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—So many of my City acquaintances whom I have consulted at lunch or in the train about my new house have said, "You ought to have an architect," that I feel the enclosed diary is of public interest. Anyhow, it answers the objections raised to my project of designing the house myself.

I enclose my card and am
 Yours faithfully,

BALBUS.

June 9.—Feel this project of building myself a house biggest event in my life. Am resolved to keep diary. Sophronia says, "Mind you *do* keep it." I will. Architect calls himself Benson Friba. Odd name; but Sir George Bilger, who recommended him, writes that he is "the coming man."

June 10.—Not much done. Did not know architect's address except that it was Gray's Inn Square, so asked man with broom in Square where Benson Friba's office was. Man asked, "Is he a *harshtect*?" Have taken liking to word. At entry of house indicated by man found name painted on wall, "Mr. Benson Benson,

F.R.I.B.A. (i.e. "Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Harshtects"). Sir George apparently thought "Friba" a title of rank similar to Pasha. Found my way slowly up to top floor, where Benson nests in rookery of Fribas. Some confusion as four names distributed among three doors but identified my harshtect's door at last and knocked.

Benson's office boy sits at a desk, looks out of windows and taps for a living with a pencil. He went to inner door, came back, asked me to take seat and resumed his tapping. Studied framed picture titled "Proposed house for F. Cheese, Esqr.," and discovered that bicycle accident in road was really nursemaid with perambulator talking to Arabian dwarf with turban and naked scimitar. Bell rings and I am shown into Benson's room. There are two dusty silk hats on top of cupboard, violoncello case and golf clubs in corner, and Gladstone bag in middle of floor. Benson Friba was in shooting clothes. Nervous manner; pulls his fingers and says, "I see, I see," but *does* seem to understand. Told him what we wanted—i.e., library, drawing-room, Brodie's patent self-cleansing lavatory basins, conservatory, perforated gauze

to larder window to keep out flies, entrance hall with alcove at side for billiard table (full size), study, boudoir, squash racquet court at back and scraper at entrance firmly fixed because ours wobbled about and the man who came to mend it did not do it properly. Dining-room, of course, and kitchen, etc.

Friba listens nervously; says, "I see, I see," and then asks, "What style?"

"A thoroughly good style of house," I tell him. He means, however, what style of architecture. "What building do I particularly admire?" he asks.

"Westminster Abbey," I tell him.

"I see."

Friba then pensive; finally he says, "The sort of house you want is a Pseudo-neo-Grec house."

"Do I?"

"Yes."

"Oh, all right."

"Yes, you would like it."

"Would I?"

"Yes."

"Right; but don't forget the scraper and the fly gauze."

Friba makes note on blotting pad and asks how much I expect to spend.

"At the outside?"

"Certainly at the outside."

"Five thousand."

"I see."

When I told Friba we wanted French windows to drawing-room he became dejected. Says, "Then it can't be Pseudo-neo-Grec." He explains this at great length. Seems to know what he is talking about. I tell him "All right, never mind the French windows, but we want a big bay-window to library."

"You won't like that," he says.

"Why not?"

"Well, for *one* thing it isn't Pseudo-neo-Grec."

He again explains at length. Evidently he is right.

"Well, never mind the bay-window, but we are very fond of oak beams and carved gables," I tell him.

"I am afraid that is out of the question," says Friba.

"Why?"

"Because it isn't Pseudo-neo-Grec."

It struck me Friba was coming it a bit strong, but he clearly showed me we did *not* like beams and carved gables, but only *thought* we liked them.

"All right; leave 'em out."

My harshest waxen enthusiastic as we discuss the house. Says he will send rough sketches and then we can talk over details. Bid him good-bye. Then go back, put my head in at the door and say, "Lots of cupboards, please." Expect to hear "Pseudo-neo," &c., but Friba (who for some reason has begun to undress) agrees at once. Good chap, Friba. Have not told Sophronia about windows and oak timbers. Shall make most of cupboards.

July 16.—Sketches came by second post. Fine-looking house, but very strong and unpleasant smell. Don't understand plans yet. Cannot find any scraper. Only one cupboard.

July 18.—Have solved plans at last. Friba has drawn them upside down. No scraper, though; and can't see fly gauze. Sophronia discovered three more cupboards, then had to give up owing to smell of paper. No conservatory, no racquet court, no verandah. Can't understand. Billiard-alcove only fourteen feet square. We cannot make out what thing like starfish in kitchen yard is. No linen-room. Have written Friba asking why no verandah or conservatory or racquet court.

August 13.—No reply from Friba. Hear he is in Scotland. Have written asking estimate of cost. Sophronia has discovered another cupboard. Starfish proves to be pattern of paving.

August 14.—Wire from Friba: "Oban: Because Pseudoneogrec."

August 17.—Wire from Friba: "Penzance: Estimate from twelve to fourteen thousand."

A DEBT OF HONOUR.

By her unhappy machinations my sister-in-law has landed me in hot water again, and I am in need of advice. For if, on the one hand . . . but perhaps I had better first give you the facts and then you can judge for yourselves.

One Sunday in April I was sitting in her drawing-room waiting for her to offer me some tea. For the last twenty minutes I had been throwing out hints, which passed, however, unheeded. Frances does talk so.

"This morning," she said, breaking out afresh after a momentary lull, "this morning I saw—what do you think?"

"A man holding a mug," I suggested hopefully.

"No. Down in the waterside meadow I saw a swallow. Aren't you glad it's the spring again?"

"Are you sure it wasn't a labourer making a noise that looked like a swallow?" I asked, with grave misgivings. "Spring doesn't really begin, you know, till I've ordered my fancy vests."

"My dear boy, where is your nose? Can't you *smell* that it's spring in the air, in the earth, in the trees—everywhere?"

I took a sniff, just to humour her.

"I can only smell the spring-cleaning," I said, "and it always upsets me."

I sighed and went on with my thirst.

"Now that spring is upon us once more," she persisted in the voice of one with a mission, "there's something I've been wanting to speak to you about."

She paused. I cast my mind hurriedly back over the interval since last I had seen her. What had I been doing now?

"It's this," she said impressively: "it's quite time you thought seriously of settling down. Everybody says so."

"Don't move. I'm very comfortable, thanks."

"You know very well what I mean. Think how nice it would be," she went on in mellifluous tones, "to have someone always to love and protect, someone to welcome you at night and talk to you when you're lonely."

I thought about it.

"I don't see much in it," I said. "Nothing has been fixed up definitely, I hope—not for a day or two?"

"Don't be so absurd!"

"Upon my word, I don't know," I replied. "Since you all seem to have made up your minds about it. Produce the bride, then. Where is she? Why keep her skulking in the background? Is *nothing* ready for me?"

Frances gave a mysterious smile which annoyed me.

"Please understand," I pursued, with some heat, "I'm not going to get married for anyone, unless I like. And at present I don't like. . . . Besides, I can't afford it," I added a little too hastily.

"What? With—why you're not in debt again already?"

"Er—technically—you see," I proceeded to explain, "it's the buttons. They keep on coming off. And so—what happens—"

"How much do you owe your tailor this time?" She eyed me severely as she spoke. My mind never works really well when people stare at me, and my memory is not what it was.

"I *forget* for the moment. But I dare say I could find out for you."

"And I suppose there's a lot more besides?"

"Er—now you come to mention it," I began.

"I thought so. Then it's certainly time you had someone to look after you," she announced with decision.

"That's not what you said just now, you know. You promised me that I was going to have the looking after somebody. That's not fair."

"I shall see about it at once."

"Give me till tea-time," I pleaded; "I'm very thirsty."

"Now I know the very girl for you. She's pretty, has a nice disposition, and is easily pleased."

"I ask you for tea," I complained, "and you give me a wife. Why is there all this delay? What are we waiting for? It seems to me this house isn't properly managed."

"You must get to know one another. I think you'd make a very good couple."

"I should only tread on her toes," I urged.

"Well, you shouldn't be so clumsy," she replied.

I sat up suddenly and gave Frances a piece of my mind; and there's more where that came from.

"I'm not clumsy. On the contrary, I'm said to be exceedingly graceful. If the truth were known, I believe you tell them to put their feet under mine on purpose so as to give them a secret hold over me. I'm not clumsy. Clumsy!" and I laughed with a hollow mirth.

"Her name is Gwendolen," said Frances, "Gwendolen Hope. Pretty name!"

"A very nice name," I agreed.

"I'm glad you like it, because—"

"I like it so much," I put in pleasantly, "that it seems a pity to disturb it."



Tyro (to Scotch chauffeur, who is acting as loader). "I DON'T KNOW HOW I SHALL GET ON WITH THOSE DRIVEN BIRDS."

Chauffeur. "YE'LL GFT ON ALL RICHT. ALL YE'VE GOT TO DAE'S TO POUR IT INTO THEIR BONNETS WHEN THEY'RE FLEEIN' TAE YE, AND INTO THEIR DEFFERENTIALS WHEN THEY'RE FLEEIN' PAST YE."

"Because," she continued, rising and ringing for tea, "just now I heard a knock at the door. I have asked her to tea, and I think here she is. Now mind you behave yourself!"

So that was why . . . I jumped up in alarm, preparing for flight, but it was already too late. The door opened and the bride-elect was shown in. She might easily have been worse; in fact she was really rather pretty. She wore a white serge tailor-made frock, well-shaped shoes, and brown silk stockings, which I like. Yes, she might very well have been worse. But in choosing a wife, especially the first, one has to be careful. And yet, dear friends, so inscrutable are the workings of destiny that, be as careful as you may, things have a way of turning out otherwise, in spite of every precaution. Being an actual eye-witness, I will try to explain to you exactly what happened. What happened was this. You know those cups they have nowadays, those senseless, precarious things with no balance to speak of? Well, I was handing her her third. I was taking particular pains over it, for I knew that Frances' eye was upon me. Another inch and I was practically there. And just then (to this day I cannot sufficiently account for it) something (I don't know what it was) suddenly gave way (without any warning whatever) in

the muscles of my arm. For one awful moment . . . "I've done it," I whispered, turning bloodlessly to Frances. "Look!" and I pointed to Gwendolen's lap.

If the good creature had only had the presence of mind to sit still! A girl at all handy with her needle could easily have let in a new piece, and nobody would have been any the wiser, excepting ourselves. But no. Rising quickly and without thought she spread it. And, whereas a small concentrated pool would have represented all the mischief done, many tributaries of tea flowed down to the floor in every direction, and the skirt was to all intents spoilt. I did what I could. I gave her my handkerchief and a spoon, and knelt down to point out the worst places. But unless she is not very particular, which I doubt, she will never want to wear it again. It is such a mistake, I do think, for mothers to allow young and inexperienced girls to wear white, especially white serge. Frances was obliged to lend her a cloak to go home in.

And now the question remains, what is the correct thing to do? According to Frances, having gone thus far and compromised myself, I must go further. The dictates of honour, she says, compel me to offer to buy the young person a new frock, and this would be to take

an intolerable liberty unless I first asked her hand in marriage. And I am bound to admit there is something in what she says.

Candour.

"Young Man teaches Pianoforte, practically and theoretically, 4s. monthly; painstaking with beginners, theoretically."

Advt. in "Dublin Evening Mail."

Practically—well, you should hear him.

"In the end stumps were pulled up half an hour before time, three having then fallen."

Daily Telegraph.

By which time even a single-wicket match was impossible.

"FIRST ZINGARI v. GEORGE ORR'S XI."
Glasgow Evening News.

The First Zingari, who are very proud of being first, have acquired the bad habit of calling themselves "I Zingari," instead of the more grammatical "We Zingari." This was bound to lead to trouble sooner or later.

"A pretty Summer Frock in spugged crepon with plague of Chinese embroidery, and flat vassell at the corsage."

East Anglian Daily Times.

This sounds like another orgy.

"Violent guests caught us, but the monoplane behaved splendidly all the time."

Daily Mail.

An example to Ministers attacked by Suffragettes.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

NOTHING about Mr. HALL CAINE's latest novel impresses me quite so much as its ruthlessness, the ineluctable vigour of its advance. He is a bloodhound on the trail of pathos, stretches octopus tentacles of coincidence, out of the pigeon-holes of memory plucks like a hawk every topic of recent interest, from the story of *Marie Claire* to the foibles of the Smart Set, from the Minority Report on the Divorce Commission to the discovery of the South Pole, and sweeps them all onwards to the great and final thrill. *Mary O'Neill*, the heroine of *The Woman Thou Gavest Me* (HEINEMANN), educated in a convent, was forced into a marriage of "suitability" with the dissolute profligate Lord Raa (situate on the Isle of Ellan, wherever that may be), refused to be his wife in more than name, was humiliated because he flaunted his mistresses in her face, found no sympathy from Church, relations, or law in her struggle for freedom, and at last, just before he sailed for Antarctic parts, gave herself to her life-long lover, *Martin Conrad*. When she found that she was to become a mother she fled to London; suffered, starved, and in order to keep the child alive was just about to earn the wages of infamy on the night when *Martin* (whose ship was reported lost) arrived in London. "Yes, the very next man who comes along," I thought. The next man was *Martin*. . . . The elements and supernatural omens are pressed with equal relentlessness into the awful march. When *Mary* interviewed the bishop about the possibility of divorce, a "vast concourse of crows" was holding congress in the tall elms of Bishop's Court. As she left, "a dead crow tumbled" from one of them to the ground. There are a hundred-and-sixteen chapters in *The Woman Thou Gavest Me*, and a great many tearful incidents, but I think I felt sorriest about the death of that crow. Poor bird.

With regard to *Miss King's Profession* (MILLS AND BOON), I am in the same position as if I had come across an excellent brew of home-made lemonade, a liquor which, however good of its kind, I should hesitate to press upon a stranger of whose taste in drinks I had no knowledge. There are those who neither have nor desire to form acquaintance with such a mild beverage. Myself, though no literary teetotaler, I found the book most refreshing. Mrs. FRANCIS CHANNON writes of schoolgirls and primarily for schoolgirls; in her ingenuous and innocent plot virtue of the more homely sort triumphs all the way. But if the tale is not intoxicating it is by no means flavourless; the career of *Miss King*, so far as it consists of Work with her Pen (always capitalized), is most lively and cannot but prove amusing and instructive to all who Write, have Written, or mean to Write. This young lady, having distinguished herself at school by composing essays elegant in style and agreeable in sentiment, settles down with serious purpose and at regular hours to develop that talent, of the

possession of which she is, like the rest of us, inwardly conscious. So doing, she affords Mrs. CHANNON the opportunity of knocking the bottom out of all the nonsense which is current with respect to the Writing and publishing of novels, and the real position is nicely summed up, with a simple directness and many sly touches of humour, as between the publishers and the authors, the point being that if there are some knaves amongst the former there is a much larger proportion of fools among the latter. In the title, moreover, we have a *double entente*; there is another profession, more conventional but no less honourable, open to *Miss King*. Men who still believe in real women, and real women who still believe in themselves, must find in the conclusion of this pretty story an element of peace and quiet very welcome in these sexless days. To those to whom I dare not, for reasons above given, recommend the draught as a thirst-quencher, I advise it with some confidence as a soothing medicine of a most pleasing nature.

HAVE you ever encountered one of those depressing little



THE DOUBLE LIFE OF A CELEBRITY.

THE PROPRIETOR OF THE "EVERYBODY'S USING IT" TROUSER-PRESS MANUFACTORY.

volumes published in the early part of the last century (and still to be met with on second-hand bookstalls, or the topmost shelves of circulating libraries) called usually by some such title as "Irish Wit and Humour"? Well, though it would be unkind to suggest too close an analogy between these and *Knockinscreen Days* (METHUEN), I am afraid I must confess that Mr. JACKSON C. CLARK's book did remind me of them more than a little. The trouble, I take it, for all writers of Irish studies is that, the Irish being accepted as a race of comedians, some show of Wit and Humour has to be somehow got into all anecdotes about them. On the cover of this volume, for example, is an illustration (reproducing one of four excellent drawings to be found within) which presents a gentleman in a farmyard being knocked down by the rush of several pigs, while a small boy flourishes a blackthorn in the distance. This is very typical of the ground of my complaint. I could have been far more entertained with the doings of Mr. CLARK's characters had they been less obviously out for laughs at all cost. As it is, his pictures of life in an Ulster village have at least a topical interest; more especially in such examples as that which describes the celebration of St. Patrick's Day in a Protestant neighbourhood, and what came of it. As for *Jimmy McGaw*, however, whom the publishers describe as "a manservant with original ideas," I can only regret that I found his originality too farcical to be amusing. This was my misfortune and not my fault. It is ill dogmatizing about humour. Very possibly other readers may be more happy: so I will leave it at that.

Financial Candour.

From a circular:—

"Quite a good number of our customers have taken advantage of this gilt-edged investment, which we can with every confidence recommend as a stock for those who wish their money placed so they will have no further trouble with regard to either the principal or interest."